



Letter No. 3616
Friday, May 13, 2011
Creative Media & Broadcast Center
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BROADCASTERS LETTER

#3616

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(May 12)

RECORD AG EXPORT PACE HAS AG SECRETARY EXCITED

US agricultural exports set a record for the first half of a fiscal year and are set to break another record at the end of this current fiscal year.

For radio story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15271>

PENDING FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS AND ASSURING IMPROVED AG TRADE

Two Obama Administration officials explained the importance of pending free trade agreements and of enforcing such agreements.

For radio story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15272>

US-SOUTH KOREA FTA AND BEEF TRADE QUESTIONS

A concern connected to potential US-South Korea Free Trade Agreement is full restoration of US beef trade to that country. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack says fully restoring US beef exports to South Korea through a new Free Trade Agreement could set a pattern to fully reopen other Asian markets now limited to our beef.

For radio story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15276>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15277>

(May 11)

USDA GETS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

An independently produced report that provides a Civil Rights Assessment of the USDA's field-based program delivery and makes recommendations intended to ensure that all Americans have fair and equal access to USDA programs. "From the day I took office as Secretary, I made it a department-wide priority to ensure that all eligible Americans receive equal access to USDA programs, and this report provides a roadmap that will help us continue moving forward in this effort," says Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "USDA employees and our partners throughout the country are to be commended for the commitment being made to diversity, inclusion, and accessibility and that they realize our work must continue."

The Civil Rights Assessment report makes department-wide recommendations that will help the USDA improve service delivery to minority and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, and also suggests agency-specific changes to enhance program delivery and outreach to promote diversity, inclusion and accessibility.

The recommendations include adoption of a new workforce analysis process, customer service analysis, and increased measurement of objectives through managerial employee performance plans. The report also outlines some department successes, including socially disadvantaged group participation in some USDA housing loan programs. At the same time the report provides recommendations designed to improve outreach, documentation of public contact and streamline program application processes for the program.

To develop the various recommendations within the report, Jackson Lewis LLP Corporate Diversity Counseling Group, surveyed Washington, D.C. and field office staff in four agencies: The Farm Service Agency, Rural Development, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Risk Management Agency.

A sampling of recommendations that have been or are currently being implemented into the USDA operations can be seen at <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>.

Under Secretary Vilsack's leadership, the USDA is addressing civil rights complaints that go back decades to resolve allegations of past discrimination and usher in "a new era of civil rights" for the Department. In February 2010, the Secretary announced the *Pigford II* settlement with African American farmers, and in October 2010, he announced the *Keepseagle* settlement with Native American farmers. In February 2011, Secretary Vilsack announced the establishment of a process to resolve the claims of Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers. An overview of Secretary Vilsack's comprehensive efforts is available [here](#). A summary of the report can be read [here](#). The full report can be read [here](#).

Contact: USDA Office of Communications (202) 720-4623

For full story: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

STATEMENT FROM AG SEC TOM VILSACK ON RECORD AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS FOR FIRST HALF OF FISCAL YEAR 2011

"Today's trade data demonstrate that, once again, America's farmers and ranchers are helping lead the way to recovery from the worst economic recession in decades. The gains in U.S. agricultural exports are particularly encouraging news for those who live in rural America or earn a living in farming, ranching and agriculture-related industries, because exports are creating jobs here at home. Farm exports alone will support more than one million jobs in America this year. Strong U.S. farm exports will be a key contributor to building an economy that continues to grow, innovate and out-compete the rest of the world.

"At \$75 billion, U.S. agricultural exports for FY 2011 are 27 percent higher than the same period in last year. This puts us on track to reach the current USDA export forecast of \$135.5 billion by the end of the year.

"As expected, China is our top export market. With \$15.1 billion in farm exports, China accounted for nearly 20 percent of all U.S. agricultural exports. Canada is our second-largest market.

"Both the value and volume of exports rose in the first half of the year, with the volume of bulk shipments up 5 percent from last year. Wheat and cotton volumes were especially robust, with increases of 64 percent 44 percent, respectively.

"March was the highest-grossing month for U.S. agricultural exports ever. During that month alone, U.S. farmers and ranchers exported \$13.3 billion worth of U.S. agricultural goods. That's \$407 million more than the previous record set in November 2010.

"Congress can help U.S. farmers and ranchers sustain their record growth by moving expeditiously to pass the South Korea, Colombia and Panama trade agreements. When fully implemented, those three agreements have potential to add more than \$2 billion per year to our exports and support job creation here at home. Gains like these will help farmers and ranchers continue to contribute to President Obama's National Export Initiative goal of doubling all U.S. exports by 2014."

The latest export data is available via the Global Agricultural Trade System at <http://www.fas.usda.gov/data.asp>

Contact: USDA Office of Communications (202) 720-4623
For full story: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

CROP PRODUCERS FACE A POSSIBLY GOOD YEAR

If the new USDA projections issued this week pan out, crop producers will have a higher net incomebut livestock producers could be squeezed. USDA economist, Larry Salathe, giving a very general overview of what Wednesday's USDA reports projected for the coming marketing year.

For radio story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15259>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15261>

(May 10)

CORN PRODUCTION UP IN FIRST NUMBERS FOR 2011-2012

US Corn production should set a record this year, according to the May USDA Crop Production and World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates. If the new USDA projections issued this week pan out, crop producers will have a higher net incomebut livestock producers could be squeezed. USDA economist, Larry Salathe, talks about some of the record high prices being projected for crops in the next marketing year. Salathe, gives a very general overview of what Wednesday's USDA reports projected for the coming marketing year.

For radio story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15251>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15257>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15256>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15255>

RIVER LEVEES HOLDING AGAINST FLOOD THREATS

So far, levees in places like Memphis are holding back near record high water on the Mississippi River. USDA Meteorologist Brad Rippey explains why many points along the middle and lower Mississippi River have had water levels at or near record highs over the last two weeks.

For radio story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15245>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15246>

(May 9)

SOUTHERN PLAINS BECOMES MORE BAKED

Triple digit high temperatures this past weekend are having negative impacts on many parts of the Southern Plains. USDA Meteorologist Brad Rippey notes recent triple digit temperatures in the Southern Plains is factoring into the continued outbreak of wildfires in that region.

For radio story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15232>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15233>

ANOTHER ACTIVE WEATHER SYSTEM IN THE US THIS WEEK

Potential lightning strikes to yet more tornado activity could come from a series of weather patterns in our nation this week. USDA Meteorologist Brad Rippey explains how the latest round of active weather in parts of the country could impact field work as farmers try to plant spring crops.

For radio story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15234>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15235>

CORN PLANTING MAKES PROGRESS THIS WEEK

A break from the weather allowed many corn producers time to catch up on their crop planting this past week. USDA Meteorologist Brad Rippey looks at how much of, and where, this year's national soybean crop is being planted. Rippey says a mixed bag of weather in different cotton producing regions is having an impact on planting progress.

For radio story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15236>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15237>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15238>

(May 6 and 5)

INTERAGENCY REPORT TO CONGRESS HIGHLIGHTS RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT ON PUBLIC LANDS

The *New Energy Frontier - Balancing Energy Development on Federal Lands* report submitted to Congress by the Interior and Agriculture departments tells details of how the Obama Administration continued to make significant gains last year in expanding renewable energy initiatives on public lands and offshore areas. "To increase our energy security and to help reduce costs for American consumers, we must continue our balanced and comprehensive approach to energy development on public lands and waters," says Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar. "The report describes the milestone progress we are making in harnessing America's solar, wind, and geothermal potential, while also supporting safer and more environmentally responsible conventional energy development."

"Winning America's energy future requires generating energy from a broad portfolio of home-grown renewable options," says Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "The report details the progress we've made in leveraging federal resources to help move our country towards a stronger energy future and reduces our need for importing foreign oil."

The joint USDA and DOI report responds to congressional interest regarding the development of renewable and conventional energy from federal lands and Outer Continental Shelf areas. The report documents the progress made to date and the Administration's plan of action for continued initiatives to ensure accountability, efficiency and responsibility in the management of Federal energy resources.

Under USDA Secretary Vilsack's leadership efforts are underway to develop the next generation of biofuels and wood to energy options. Among other initiatives, the report described the Administration's efforts to spur the development of environmentally responsible commercial-scale wind, geothermal and solar projects in the West and to open appropriate areas of the Atlantic Ocean to wind turbine farms -- areas that hold vast energy resources. The development of wind, solar, hydropower, and other renewable energy systems that can substantially reduce carbon dioxide emissions on a lifecycle basis has been a top priority under Interior Secretary Salazar. To see the departments' major renewable energy initiatives last year go to: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>. To view the report, [click here](#).

Kendra Barkoff, 202-208-6416 or Matthew Herrick, 202-720-3088
For full story: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

SUMMER WILDFIRE SEASON TO MIRROR SPRING ACTIVITY

The Desert Southwest and Southern Plains will continue to be wildfire hot spots going into the summer months. USDA Radio's Rod Bain spoke with Robin Heffernen of the National Interagency Fire Center.

For radio story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15226>

USDA SELECTS 2011 CLASS OF E. (KIKA) DE LA GARZA FELLOWS

The 21 members of the 2011 class of E. (Kika) de la Garza Fellowship were selected as a part of the USDA's Hispanic-Serving Institutions National Program. The participants are highly accomplished staff and faculty members at Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) from across the nation, were selected based on the compatibility of their research interests with USDA mission areas, as well as the value their experiences will add to their institutions' educational capacities during the fellowship.

HSIs are accredited and degree-granting institutions of higher education with a full-time Hispanic student enrollment of 25 percent or more. Through partnerships fostered by the fellowship program, USDA and HSIs are better prepared to address educational challenges faced by the Hispanic community and to promote services and employment opportunities offered by USDA agencies while diversifying the Department's workforce.

The 14th class of the E. (Kika) de la Garza Fellowship is divided into three categories, each specially tailored to meet the fellows' interests and provide them with an enriching experience. The Education and High School Fellows experience first-hand the policymaking process by meeting with USDA personnel and connecting with federal agencies such as the Department of Education, Housing and Urban Development, and the National Science Foundation. The science fellows collaborate with leading scientists from USDA's Agricultural Research Service--one of the world's premier scientific organizations--and learn about state-of-the-art agricultural research that solves problems affecting the Hispanic community on a daily basis. For a list of the 2011 E.

(Kika) de la Garza Fellows go to <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>. For more information on the E. (Kika) de la Garza Fellowship program visit: <http://www.hsi.usda.gov/HSIs/fellowship.htm>.

Contact: Maria Goldberg (202) 720-6506
For full story: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

For more agriculture news go to www.usda.gov and click Newsroom on the toolbar.
Also, check out the [USDA Blog](#)



FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA CD # 20.11 – The USDA has named the first 11 companies to receive its new voluntary biopreferred product label for certified biobased products. The new product labeling will allow consumers to definitively identify products made from renewable sources. Susan Carter has the story in this edition of Agriculture USA.

CONSUMER TIME CD # 20.11 – A Possible Reversal Of A Ten Year Veggie Consumption Trend. USDA Unveils New Anti-Hunger Tool Kit. Location Is The Key In Mole Control. Help Your Air Conditioner To Keep You Cool. The Challenges Of Summer Child Care.

AG UPDATE CD # 20.11 – Higher Crop Prices In New Marketing Year? Consultation As A Pesticide Regulation Tool. Making Limited Dollars Go Farther At FSA. Impacts Of Bilateral Trade Agreements On Nations. Recent High Water Proves The Importance Of Levees.

UPCOMING ON THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE – May 17 – Crop Weather (WAOB); Livestock, Poultry, and Dairy Outlooks (ERS-WAOB). May 20 – Cattle On Feed Report (NASS). May 23 - Crop Progress Report (NASS). **These are USDA reports we know about in advance. The Radio Newsline carries many stories every day that are not listed in this lineup.**

Access the Radio Newsline at 202-720-6776, 5PM ET or go to www.usda.gov, click on Newsroom at top of page, scroll down on right side of page to Radio and TV.

Then click on Daily Radio News Service or Weekly Radio Feature Service.
Questions on USDA Radio's Features, fax name, station, and address to 202-690-2165.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

Sam Bradford Joins Let's Move/Peoples Garden Campaigns

NFL star and Heisman trophy winner Sam Bradford partners with federal programs to get kids to be more active and eat a healthy diet.

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=liNs0wDhcKA>
WMV: <mms://ocbmtcwmp.usda.gov/content/bmtc/vnr/samCAP.wmv>

A new feature is available on the USDA FTP site

Filename: Sam Bradford Feature

Download instructions:

The host: <ftp://ocbmtcmedia.download.akamai.com>

User name: usdanews

Password: Newscontent1

The new file is in QuickTime Movie (H.264), MPEG 4, MPEG2 and HDV.

Please email bob.ellison@usda.gov if you have problems or suggestions.

Also, use this free ftp client if you have problems.

<http://filezilla-project.org/download.php?type+client>

OFF MIKE

A WEB SERVICES DIVISION FOR 'HOOSIER AG TODAY' – The purpose of the new technology is for HAT to better serve its sponsors and radio stations. **Gary Truitt** (Hoosier Ag Today - Indianapolis, Indiana www.hoosieragtoday.com) says "We are now able to offer creative and effective web-based products that deliver our time sensitive content and advertising messages to Indiana farmers using internet and wireless technology." **Truitt** adds this will include web site design and optimization, news content distribution, e-mail newsletter creation and management, wireless application development, new media sales and marketing support, and integration of broadcast and web-based advertising campaigns. Additionally, HAT will work with other agricultural media organizations to develop customized web and wireless products. Broadcast, web, and wireless products will allow farmers to run their farming operations, at the same time being able to stay on top of the weather, news and ag issues.

Jon Truitt will be managing the operation and coordinating internal and external resources to customize products to meet a client's needs, along with working to improve the agricultural content of their web sites and develop specific products to help businesses reach their customers.

LUNCH FROM THE FARM – The program is called "Feed the Farmer". **Von Ketelsen** (KWMT - Fort Dodge, Iowa www.kwmt.com) says for 8 weeks in the spring and 8 weeks in the fall, "We take names from different sections of Iowa. We choose 1 winner per week, and we take lunch for up to 8 people to their farm, and I broadcast my program, the KWMT Power Lunch, from the farm."

For those who don't know, **Ketelsen** is a musician. He'll be playing his guitar and singing at a number of music festivals this summer. "So far, I've opened for nationally-known country group, Highway 101."

SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE IS BEING REPORTED WEST OF OSCEOLA, NE – The damage is to out buildings, barns and grain storage bins. "The Polk County Sheriff's Department said several pivots were turned over and several out buildings reported damage south of town. Reports also included roof damage to homes and up-rooted trees," says **Susan Littlefield** (KZEN - Columbus, Nebraska www.mycentralnebraska.com). **Littlefield** adds, producers welcomed the rain, as there was concern about the beans going in the ground with some tough planting surfaces.

"Monday & Tuesday brought temps close to 100 and as the week continues should see mid 50's by Friday."

SPRING PLANTING PROGRESS IN SOUTH DAKOTA – But rain is slowing things considerably. "Many producers are going around many potholes in each field, but want to get as much of their crop in as they can, says **Jody Heemstra** (KWAT - Watertown, South Dakota www.kwat950.com). "There will be a lot of prevented plant acres here again this year. Many rural roads, beat up from flooding last year, haven't been fixed and this spring's flooding has taken a toll on many more making travel to fields that are workable extremely challenging. Pastures look good so far, but could use more sun. Water supplies in the pasture are, obviously, plentiful."

USDA HAS SURPLUS ITEMS FOR AUCTION THE PUBLIC CAN BUY – The items are sold in **bulk** and include laptops, computer and security equipment, televisions, appliances, and miscellaneous electronic equipment. For the five days leading up to the auction you can view the catalog at www.bsc.usda.gov. Once there click on "Auctions" under Announcements and Events.

WHEN: **Thursday, May 19, 2011**, 9:00 am to 12-noon
Inspection of property is **May 17** and **May 18**, 9 am to 3 pm

WHERE: Beltsville Service Center
6351 Ammendale Road
Beltsville MD 20705
(Rear loading dock area)

CONTACT: (301) 394-0400

Visa, MasterCard, Discover, American Express, Cashier's Check and Money Orders (all checks and money orders must be made payable to U.S. Department of Agriculture) are accepted. **No cash.**

***Broadcasters if you have any humanitarian or community service events
you'd like to share please forward to susan.carter@oc.usda.gov.
We love to hear about what you're doing and
share it with others in the farm broadcaster family.***

From all of us to all of you ... thank you for what you do

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